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CLAIMS

1. An apparatus for handling grape material including:
a support structure;
5 a receptacle for containing a grape material having an opening at one end and being rotatable about a pivotal connection with the support structure; and
an actuator for rotating the receptacle in a controlled manner from an upright position in which a grape material may be contained in the receptacle to a tipped position in which the
10 contents of the receptacle may be emptied via the opening.
2. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the receptacle includes a collar that is pivotally connected to the support structure
15 and wherein the actuator rotates the collar with respect to the support structure.
- 20 3. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the actuator is an hydraulic actuator.
- 25 4. An apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the actuator comprises a pair of rams provided on either side of the receptacle, each connected at one end to the support structure and at the other end to the receptacle at a point away from the pivotal connection.
5. An apparatus as claimed in claim 4 wherein the hydraulic rams are connected to the collar.
- 30 6. An apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the support structure supports a plurality of receptacles which each tip their contents into a common region.

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7. An apparatus as claimed in claim 6 wherein a pair of receptacles are provided in an opposing configuration and empty their contents into a region between the two receptacles.

5 8. A method of supplying grape material from a bulk receptacle to a receiving receptacle including the steps of:

- i) supplying grape material to the bulk receptacle; and
- ii) actuating an actuator which tilts the bulk receptacle relative to the support frame in a controlled manner to deliver the grape material directly or indirectly to a receiving receptacle.

10 9. A method as claimed in claim 8 wherein the bulk receptacle is tilted in a number of steps in order to supply grape material to the receiving receptacle at a desired rate.

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10. A method as claimed in claim 9 or claim 10 wherein a plurality of bulk receptacles are employed and grape material is sequentially supplied from each bulk receptacle to supply grape material to the receiving receptacle.

20 11. A method as claimed in any one of claims 8 to 10 wherein the receiving receptacle is a press.

25 12. A method as claimed in any one of claims 8 to 10 wherein the receiving receptacle is a conveyor.

13. The combination of apparatus for emptying a receptacle, and a receptacle, comprising:

30 a stationary support frame adapted to be supported upon the ground or equivalent supporting surface, said support frame providing a framework which at least partially surrounds the receptacle;

securing means for securing said receptacle to said support frame, such that said receptacle is suspended in a substantially upright position clear of the ground and of said framework; said securing means including a collar which at least partially surrounds said receptacle and is secured thereto; said collar being pivoted to said support frame;

moving means mounted between said collar and said support frame; said moving means being operable to move said receptacle relative to said support frame such that said receptacle may be tilted in a controlled manner between a first, substantially upright, position within said support frame and a second, raised and inclined, position outside of said support frame.

14. The combination as claimed in claim 13 comprising a cat walk rigidly secured to said support frame at just below the level of the top of the receptacle in said second position.

15. The combination as claimed in claim 13 or claim 14 wherein said support frame is dimensioned and arranged to provide one or more supporting legs beneath the point of balance of the receptacle in said second position.

16. The combination as claimed in any one of claims 13 to 15, further comprising a gantry rigidly secured to said support frame, said gantry extending horizontally just below the level of the top of the receptacle in said second position.

17. The combination as claimed in claim 16 wherein said gantry supports a pouring guide which is vertically below an outlet in or adjacent the top of the receptacle, when said receptacle is in said second position.

~~18. The combination as claimed in claim 16 or claim 17 wherein~~

~~the end of the gantry remote from said support frame is securable
to a wall, the ground or equivalent support.~~

19. The combination of apparatus for emptying two receptacles,
and two receptacles, comprising;

a pair of opposed stationary support frames each adapted to
be supported upon the ground or equivalent supporting surface,
one support frame providing a framework which at least partially
surrounds one of the receptacles, and the other support frame
providing a framework which at least partially surrounds the other
of the receptacles;

securing means for securing each receptacle to the
corresponding support frame, such that said receptacle is
suspended in a substantially upright position clear of the ground
and of said corresponding framework; each said securing means
including a collar which at least partially surrounds said
corresponding receptacle and is secured thereto; each said collar
being pivoted to said corresponding support frame;

moving means mounted between each said collar and said
corresponding support frame; each said moving means being
operable to move said corresponding receptacle relative to said
corresponding support frame such that said receptacle may be
tilted in a controlled manner between a first, substantially upright,
position within said corresponding support frame and a second,
raised and inclined, position outside of said corresponding support
frame; and

a gantry rigidly secured between said opposed support
frames, said gantry extending horizontally just below the level of
the top of said receptacles in said second position.

20. The combination as claimed in claim 19 wherein said gantry
supports a pouring guide, which is positioned so as to be vertically
below an outlet in or adjacent the top of either of the receptacles,

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when said receptacle is in said second position.

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21. The combination as claimed in claim 19 or 20, wherein said gantry also provides one or more cat walks.

22. The combination as claimed in any one of claims 13 to 21 wherein the or each said moving means comprises a pair of spaced hydraulic rams.

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